

CARVED OPEN DOOR PANELS, IN A HOUSE, ANGEL COURT, CITY!

BY INIGO JONES.

ANY person having a taste for the style of our early English Classic Architects, who could devote some time to ferret out what at present remains of their works in the City, would be well rewarded. Besides the ancient buildings belonging to the city companies with their princely halls, rich with carved screens, and gorgeous ceilings, the elevated dais and large with-drawing parlours, their quaint furniture and their store of plate of the reign of Henry VIII., Elizabeth, and the Stuarts,—he would find that many of the old residences of the great London merchants had been refronted, and that while their exterior exhibited no ancient appearance, their interior remained without material alteration. The great fire must have swept away a large portion of antique buildings, but improvement has probably done more to rid the city of some of the best works of Inigo Jones, and of the still earlier architects, in those localities which the fire did not devastate.

Inigo Jones, as an architect, was, with the exception of Sir Christopher Wren, the most extensively employed in the cities of London and Westminster,—to his admirers even a fragment, such as is represented in the print, is worthy of consideration. My late master, Sir John Soane, very early acquired a taste for his works, having in youth, when trying for the silver medals of the Royal Academy, made drawings and measurements of the water front of old Somerset House and Whitehall Chapel. Of the former building, the principal front of the County Fire-office, in Regent's Street, is said by Mr. Gwilt (see Chambers's Treatise on Civil Architecture by Gwilt, pp. 234 and 371,) to be an indifferent copy. Mr. Gwilt remarks, "that the loss of Jones' building at Somerset House is much to be regretted. It was not only, perhaps, the most elegant of the works of Inigo, but contained fewer abuses than most of his other buildings."

During Sir John Soane's long life he never lost an opportunity of obtaining measurements and delineations of any work, either supposed or known to be Inigo's; and at a late period, at a considerable expense, we, his pupils, were sent in the country for that purpose; and in this way he formed a very large number of drawings, some of which were exhibited to the students at the Royal Academy during his lectures: they are now preserved at his Museum in Lincoln's-inn-Fields. Of this collection I have copies, and the B. B. has already had reduced drawings of a few of them. The present subject represents two carved open door panels in a house in Angel Court, near the Bank of England, and Sir John, who inspected the building, put it down as a work of Inigo's, and had drawings made from it. Of course considerable difficulty must exist, in correctly fixing any isolated example in the city to Inigo, but the style of this example, the full rich foliage, disclosing a profusion of fruits, amongst which Cupids and animals seem to sport, and which remind one so strongly of the friezes in the Baths of Dioclesian and the Torre di Nerone, is certainly that of his day, before the elegant, slight curving of Gibbons came into fashion.

The house in Angel Court, at the time the drawing was made, probably thirty years since, was occupied by Mr. Lear. I have not seen the building myself; any person who would now venture into the immediate neighbourhood of the Stock Exchange, during the present railway excitement, after purely antiquarian purposes, would probably be mistaken for a madman. It is not my intention to enter into a long catalogue of the works of this great man, nor to give an account of his life.

There is one remarkable fact, however, connected with his productions, which I must notice. In spite of the changes of time, and the caprices of fashion; in spite of the envy of contemporaries, and the self-complacent conceit of many of his successors, though taste may have been depraved, and some of the spoilt children of fortune have given laws to better men than themselves,—still the works of Inigo Jones have compelled the unfeigned admiration of his successors. Even the hypercritical Walpole has given a warm and hearty tribute to his genius; it is at once so characteristic and so true, that I quote it: "Jones,

if a table of fame, like that in the Tatler, were to be formed for men of real and indisputable genius in every country, would save England from the disgrace of not having her representative among the Arts. She adopted Holbein and Vandyke, she borrowed Rubens, but she produced Jones. Vitruvius drew up his grammar, Palladio shewed him the practice, Rome displayed a theatre worthy of his emulation, and his king was ready to encourage, employ, and reward his talents. This is the history of Inigo Jones, as a genius."

C. J. RICHARDSON.

BENCH END FROM MINSTER CHURCH, THANET.

IN continuation of the series of bench ends drawn by Mr. Truett, which we gave a short time ago (page 330), we now present a fine example from Minster Church, in the Isle of Thanet, from a drawing by Mr. Caveler.

The Church of St. Mary at Minster is built in the form of a cross, the nave having side aisles; it is of very great antiquity, and contains some excellent work. The interior of the chancel is particularly worthy of notice; it is of that style now generally known by the name of Early English. The other principal portions of the church are Norman.

The late estimable Mr. Gage Rokewood was of opinion, as he on more than one occasion mentioned to us, that there is much Saxon work in the church, and we would direct the attention of such of our antiquarian friends as live in that neighbourhood to this point, in the hope of inducing an investigation of the building.

The chancel contains some ancient stalls, or seats of oak, carved in a bold manner, and having under the seats grotesque figures and various devices. The ends of these stalls are different in design, but that represented by our engraving may be considered the finest.

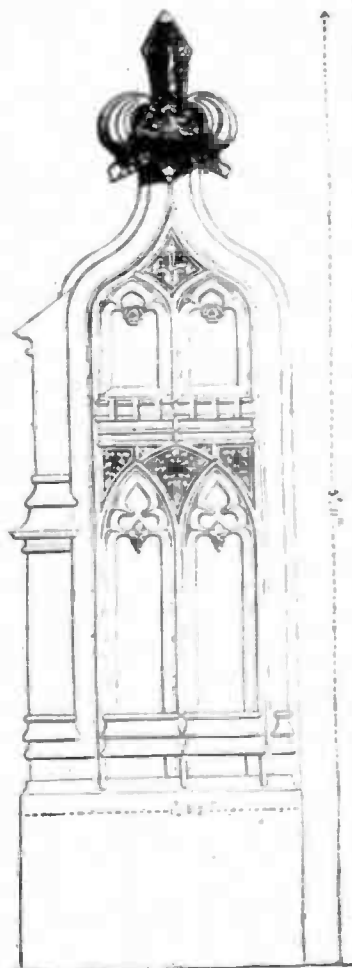
NORMAN DOORWAY, LITTLE BARFORD CHURCH.

THE annexed engraving represents the doorway of the parish church of Little Barford, in Bedfordshire, closely adjoining Huntingdonshire. It is of the Norman period, and is remarkable for the singular want of uniformity,—the studied irregularity in the ornamental compartments on the face of the arch. The scale is three-eighths of an inch to a foot.

Bond-street.

T. C. TINKLER.

BENCH END, MINSTER CHURCH.



NORMAN DOORWAY, LITTLE BARFORD CHURCH.

